

## A Serum Of Youth

A German Professor Gives His Reasons For Disapproving of Its Use

By F. A. MITCHEL

"These American scientists," said Dr. Holwig-Schneberg, original investigator at the University of Bonn, "make me tired. I have just read an article copied from an American journal stating that one of them has discovered a method of preventing decay in living organisms, or rather of renewing the primary condition, which is the same thing. He has been experimenting on bacteria and from bacteria hopes to lead up to more complex organisms. Thirty years ago I began where he is beginning today and in ten years had reached a point where I was able indefinitely to postpone youth in human beings."

"You did that!" exclaimed Professor Schneberg, taking his pipe out of his



"When I saw her again I was shocked," said he, looking through his spectacles.

"I did," replied the other.

"Why, then, did you not announce your discovery?"

"Because the only case I ever perfected demonstrated that it is not best to interfere too radically with natural processes."

"You had an experience?"

"I had; one that astonished me to permit persons to grow old in the natural way."

"Do tell me about it; I am dying of curiosity."

"Well, I began just where this American began. I made cultures of bacteria, observed the cause of decay and hunted for a serum to prevent it. I failed in this, but discovered one that would kill the decaying bacteria for a certain period and capable of continuing the process ad infinitum. I will not attempt to give you in a nutshell investigations extending over a period of ten years whereby I at last succeeded in applying my discovery to human beings. All I shall attempt to do now is to give you the principal reason why I did not announce my discovery to the world."

"When I had succeeded in keeping monkeys young and fit, my next step was to try my serum on the next and highest type of animal life—man. I had received pecuniary support from my investigations from Baron Wobel and, after trying two or three experiments on subjects, announced to him that I could keep a man at the same apparent age from the moment I began to treat him for an indefinite period. The baron was much interested and asked me many questions concerning my process—what dangers there might be to the patient, my ability to continue it and what would be the result for him after my death. I satisfied him on most of these points, whereupon he told me that a commoner, Herr Schoffenholer, enormously rich, was desirous of uniting his wealth to the baron's title. Herr Schoffenholer had a daughter aged twenty, and the baron had a son aged two. These were the only children born to either family. The only way to unite the wealth and the title was to marry these two. But the difference of age was an insurmountable difficulty."

"Now," said the baron to me, "if you can keep Fraulein Schoffenholer at her present age till my son is old enough to marry the two interests may be united."

"Here was a chance to try an experiment under favorable conditions. After numerous family councils at which a great deal of opposition was raised, Herr Schoffenholer decided the matter by compelling his daughter to submit to my treatment. I was not informed of this compulsion or that the fraulein was in love with a young guardsman a few years her senior. Had I been I would not have consented to act in the matter."

"I began my treatment on the fraulein's twentieth birthday. She responded admirably, and I saw at once

that the serum which I injected under the skin of her arm was taking effect. I found that these injections needed to be made once every twenty-two days, for on the twenty-third day a new birth of cell-destriving bacteria came up to recommence the process of decay."

"It was not long before I learned of the love affair between the guardsman and the fraulein and that clandestine meetings were taking place—at long intervals to be sure—between them. Since the fraulein remained youthful and the guardsman was growing older, his love for her grew in proportion as the difference in their ages lengthened. What effect this increasing difference had on the fraulein I did not learn, for she kept her feelings to herself. I offered to decline to continue my treatment if she wished it, but she told me that, having acceded to her father's order, she would carry it out to the end."

"Seventeen years passed. The baby boy Wobel was nineteen, the fraulein thirty-seven and the guardsman forty. The latter had never married, and his love for the fraulein had grown to be a dominant passion with him. He was getting gray and bald and showed other signs of coming old age. On the contrary the girl he worshipped had all the freshness of youth. Her beauty had not been in the least impaired. It was quite natural that a man who was now too old for other girls of the fraulein's age should cling to her, especially as she had kept pace with him in that experience which matures the intellectual powers."

"Baron Wobel would not consent to the marriage between his son and Fraulein Schoffenholer till the former came of age. The young man was within a few weeks of twenty-one, and preparations were being made for the wedding when I received a hurried call to the Schoffenholer residence. I found the fraulein very ill. This was unfortunate, for within a few days it would be necessary for me to give her an injection of the serum, and in her weakened condition I did not know what the effect would be. Indeed, I dare not administer it."

"For a time the fraulein's life hung in the balance. Then she began to mend. I left her under the care of the family physician and did not see her for a month. When I saw her again I was shocked. From a girl of twenty she had become a woman of over forty, and her illness had made her look ten or fifteen years older than that. Her hair was almost white, her skin yellow and wrinkled, her teeth badly decayed and her figure bony and angular. Indeed every feature which would have decayed gradually without my treatment had broken down within a brief period."

"Here was an embarrassing situation. Young Wobel had shown every willingness to marry the girl his father had provided for him, not only on account of beauty, which was that of a girl, and her intellect, which was that of a mature woman. But how what would he say when he should see her? Her father begged me to restore her youth and when I told him that I had no power to do so, stormed at me for a fool and an idiot."

"Young Wobel was not permitted to see his fiancee till a few days before the proposed wedding. When he met a woman who looked to be over fifty, and much broken at that, he collapsed. There was no use in trying to induce him to marry her. Indeed, at her age a marriage would be fruitless and its object defeated."

"I was placed in a very unfortunate position. Every one seemed to consider me to blame for the affair, though I had done only what I had been requested to do. I felt very sorry for Fraulein Schoffenholer, for I was obliged to admit to myself that had I permitted her to grow old as nature intended she would not now have been suddenly plunged into her present distress. In order to make amends I wrote a note to her guardian, informing him that the lady he had so long loved was now free to marry him. However, I thought it best to permit him to observe her changed condition for himself. He replied, thanking me for the information, which he declared had thrilled him with an ecstatic happiness."

"He called upon her. When the poor woman saw his shocked expression at her altered appearance she held out her arms to him, putting on just such an appealing smile as would be seductive in a girl of twenty, but was horrible in a broken down old woman. He tried to respond, but failed. After a brief interview he excused himself and has never seen her from that day to this. Recently I received his wedding cards and have learned that he is to marry a girl of sixteen."

"As for the fraulein, who had it not been for my interference with nature's laws would now have been the wife of the guardsman and the mother doubtless of grown sons and daughters, she is a withered spinster. I can never forgive myself for being the cause of her misfortune."

"This is the reason why I have never either prosecuted my discovery or given it to the world. It remains for these Americans who are upsetting the traditions of centuries to proceed in their reckless course to defy nature's laws and to make themselves generally disagreeable to the rest of the world. I would like to get this fellow who has made this so-called discovery, keep him young for a matter of thirty or forty years, then let old age come upon him at once, to see how he would like the transition. So long as they confine themselves to colonies of bacteria or to guinea pigs or monkeys there is no harm done, but when it comes to plunging a young girl into an old woman please excuse me. I've had enough of it."

## MENDING A FAUCET

An Easy Job That Mr. Gimp Tackled With Confidence.

IT GAVE HIM A BIG SURPRISE.

When He Got Through, or as Near Through as He Was Permitted to Get, He Was Rather Subdued—The Plumber's Comment Was Quite Brief.

Mr. Gimp came home from the city the other day and burst into his house with an air that meant business. He smiled when the maid told him his wife was out, laid a parcel on the stairs, took off his coat, rolled up his sleeves, took his parcel and went up to the bathroom, where he opened the package. It contained a monkey wrench, a screw driver, half a dozen assorted rubber washers and a pipe wrench.

"Thank goodness, my wife's not home!" said Mr. Gimp. "If there is anything upsets a man it is the foolish questions a woman asks when he is trying to do a job. Plumber! She'd get a plumber to mend a leaky faucet, wouldn't she? I'll show her that a man of intelligence can do a job in five minutes that a plumber would take all day to do and charge \$5. Now!"

Mr. Gimp turned the faucet. Not a drop of water came out. He turned the other. It was dry. They were the bathtub faucets, and the far one had been leaking for a week, while Mr. Gimp promised day by day to attend to it.

"Well," said Mr. Gimp as he saw that no water came out of the faucets, "that's more sense than I thought that woman possessed. Turned off the water, did she? Didn't let it run all day when there was no need of it, hey? Now!"

Mr. Gimp took the monkey wrench in one hand and the pipe wrench in the other and climbed into the bathtub. Then he sat on the edge while he studied the faucet.

"Lemme see!" he said. "You take off that handle, and you unscrew that top dinger. That's what you do." So he did that. Twice the monkey wrench slipped and he skinned three knuckles, but he got the handle off, and he unscrewed the cap and pulled out the rod that held the washer. Then he peered down into the remaining portion of the faucet and looked at the washer.

The washer seemed in good condition. He peered into the faucet and ran his finger around it, accumulating iron rust on it. If the washer was not broken what could be the matter with the thing? There must be something the matter deeper down. He set his pipe wrench around the pipe and grunted. The faucet held like grim death. The more it resisted the more he pushed and pulled and grunted and said strong words.

When the faucet gave at last it gave suddenly, and Mr. Gimp fell over the side of the bathtub and landed with a bump that shook the house. He was up again in a minute and in the bathtub. The faucet was badly mangled where the wrench had dug into its soft brass, and the nose of it was twisted awry, but the faucet was off. He took the faucet to the window and studied it. Except for the damage he had done it, there seemed nothing the matter with it.

"Some fool plumber," said Mr. Gimp angrily, "has put the wrong sort of washer into this faucet. That's what's the matter, and that's all."

He picked out a different sort of washer and put it on the plunger. It was not a good fit, but it was a change anyway.

"Now," said Mr. Gimp, and he climbed back into the bathtub. He humped himself down on his knees and looked into the water pipe on which he had to screw the faucet.

"Now," he said.

As if that had been the signal, a strong, vigorous stream of water shot out of the pipe and struck Mr. Gimp in the eye. He gasped for breath and tumbled backward. But the stream pursued him! He got up and grappled with the stream.

Unless you have tried to grapple with a stream like that you cannot even faintly imagine the difficulty of trying it a good, self-satisfying grapple. A stream like that will not fight fair. If you put your hand over the pipe the stream will squirt out in forty-two directions. Some of them hit the ceiling. Most of them hit Mr. Gimp. He wrestled silently until the bathroom was well soaked and he was well soaked, and then he decided it was better just to let the stream spurt. It spouted into the bathtub anyway. So he got out of the tub and dripped on the floor and pawed water out of his hair and wiped water out of his eyes.

And just then the plumber came upstairs again. He had been down cellar to turn on the water after he had fixed the faucet, and it was quite natural that he should come up again to see if the faucet was well fixed. So he came up, and he looked into the bathroom, and he saw the faucet lying in the bathtub among wrenches and water, and he saw the water spurting heartily.

And all he said was, "Well, I'll be darned!" Just like that—"Well, I'll be darned!" That was all he said—Ellis Parker Butler in Judge.

Didn't Want Too Much. Amateur Nimrod—Can you show me any bear tracks? Nature—I'm showing a bear. Amateur Nimrod—Thank you, very much, old chap. Tracks will suit me.—New Orleans Picayune.



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